GRACE ✦ CHURCH
ASTORIA OREGON
1864 ✦ 1939

IN MEMORY OF
REV. THOMAS ARTHUR HYLAND
WHO IN 1864 FOUNDED THIS CHURCH
AND WAS ITS FIRST RECTOR UNTIL 1878

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS

1864-1939

Grace Church

Astoria, Oregon

BISHOPS OF OREGON

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Fielding Scott, D. D.

The Rt. Rev. Benjamin W. Morris, D. D.

The Rt. Rev. Charles Scadding, D. D.

The Rt. Rev. Walter Taylor Sumner, D. D.

The Rt. Rev. Benjamin D. Dagwell, D. D.
The Fifth Bishop of Oregon

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS

Not many years after Capt. Robert Gray sailed into the Columbia and a still shorter period after the Astor and the Lewis and Clark expeditions, a representative of the Angilcan Church was on the ground. He had not been sent by our American Church but by the Church of England. He was the Rev. Hermon Beaver. He had come to be chaplain of the far Western Post of the Hudson Bay Company at Vancouver, Washington Territory.

He made a visit, according to his record, to Ft. George, as Astoria was then called, November 8th, 1838, when he baptized four children and married James Berney and Charlotte Beaulieu, in the presence of John Lord and John Dunn. Other baptisms of children whose abode was Ft. George took place in Vancouver.

As far as is known the lower Columbia area was not again visited by a missionary of the Episcopal Church for fifteen years. The records tell us that on November 15th, 1853, the Rev. John McCarty, D. D., one of the first missionaries from the Society of the Domestic and Foreign Missions in the United States, with his headquarters in Milwaukie in the Oregon Territory, arrived in Astoria. He writes: "I officiated in the evening at Astoria, near the mouth of the Columbia, to a very good congregation, but where I could find no Episcopalians; however the importance of the place requires that at least occasional services should be held there. I may here mention, as an evidence of the time necessarily consumed in performing Missionary duty in these territories, that this visit to Astoria, though by steamboat, took me from Monday afternoon to Saturday morning."

The first convocation of this great Northwest Missionary district was held in St. Paul's Church, Oregon City, October 2nd, 1853. It was attended by three clergymen and a good number of laymen. A committee, chiefly of laymen, was appointed to prepare and send a request to the General Missionary Society asking for the appointment of a Missionary Bishop, recommending the Rev. John McCarty. The General Convention of 1853, however, had other plans. It organized the Missionary District of Oregon and Washington and elected the Rev. Thomas Fielding Scott of Georgia its first Bishop. Bishop Scott arrived in Portland, April 22nd, 1854. Records show that he held services in Astoria in 1855 and '56 and in his report to the Board of Missions he wrote:

"At Astoria I have preached three times. Here I had hoped to build a church, and have regular services, but there has been no Clergyman to occupy it. In consequence of our failure to build, we have forfeited the two lots given us on that condition." Sept. 2nd, 1860, the Bishop held a Sunday service with a large attendance. During the summer of 1863 he spent two Sundays in Astoria. On the first he held services in the Methodist Church; on the second at the Court House, when he baptized one adult, and confirmed Miss Mary Adair and Miss Emma Brown.

The Rev. Thomas A. Hyland, although born in Ireland, came to

Old Grace Church, Astoria
Corner of 9th and Commercial

this country when he was but a young man. It was not long before he entered the General Theological Seminary in New York and upon finishing his studies was ordained Deacon by Bishop Horacio Potter in 1860. Immediately after his ordination he came to Oregon to work with Bishop Scott under the Board of Missions of the General Church. In his report in the Spirit of Missions, Bishop Scott states, "on Whit-Sunday, May 27th, 1860, assisted by the Rev. Dr. McCarty and Rev. Thomas A. Hyland, I consecrated St. Luke's Church in the village of Vancouver." In the same report the Bishop writes, "The Rev. T. A. Hyland started for Jacksonville, but being detained a few days in Roseburg, in the Umpqua Valley, the people became much interested in him and his ministrations, and were so desirous that he remain among them, that he consented to do so, at least until my visit. I found them so much in earnest as to propose the erection of a church edifice. For this purpose, a lot was offered by Aaron Rose, Esq., and a liberal subscription commenced. In this state of things, it seemed best for Mr. Hyland to remain." It was while Mr. Hyland was in Roseburg that he met and married Miss Martha Stearns who was teaching school. She had come west a short time before with a brother. The Hylands stayed there until September, 1881, when they left for California; "having taken up the idea that there would be a greater field of usefulness---in that state. But in the spring before leaving for California, Bishop Scott advanced Mr. Hyland to the Priesthood, Monday, 8th of April, 1861, at St. Mary's Church Eugene, assisted by Rev. Messrs. McCormick and J. R. W. Sellwood. The service was appointed for the preceding day, but the candidate was prevented by stress of weather from arriving in season." It was while the Hylands were in Folsom, California that their only child was born to them, Edward Arthur Hyland. He lived but two years. This loss may have had something to do with their short stay in California, for in August, 1864, Bishop Scott wrote, "The Rev. Thomas A. Hyland will go to Astoria for the present at least. This I consider the most promising field for him now open."

Grace Church, Astoria was established by the Rev. Mr. Hyland that same year, September 4th, 1864. For three years his congregation worshiped in the Court House. In 1866, a church building was built on the site where the Spexarth building now stands. The following record has been preserved from an article written by the Rev. Mr. Hyland, August 7th, 1867:

"That which is uppermost in my thoughts at present is our new church. It was so far completed, about four months ago, that we were able to hold services in it. - - - It was with great difficulty and self-denial that our little church was built. And although the building is yet in an unfinished condition, we had it consecrated by our late Bishop the Sunday---(after Ascension, June 2nd, 1867,) before he sailed from here for the Eastern states, so the last official acts which he

Interior of Grace Church with the Christmas greens.

ever performed in this diocese were performed here. Here he baptized the last child, here he confirmed the last candidate for confirmation And when he had completed his last service in this diocese, and had taken off his Episcopal robes, he said: 'These were formerly Bishop Wainwright's, and I will leave them here for my successor.' Rev. Mr. Hyland continues:

"But I must tell you something more about our little church. It is built in what is called the Gothic style of architecture, with a tower and spire sixty-four feet high. We have a nice bell in the tower which was purchased by the Sunday School children. They worked hard to raise the money. Each child took a share; some took two or three. A share cost one dollar, and, in consideration, we are to have the bell rung for the shareholders whenever they may have the good (or bad if you will have it) fortune to get married. Two of the shareholders have been married already. The building including the chancel and tower, is sixty-three feet long and twenty-four wide, and will seat nearly two hundred persons. It is not yet painted, nor can I say when it will be. If each of the Young Soldiers of the Second Regiment would

give twenty-five cents towards that object, we would have it painted immediately."

The next mention of the work in Astoria is the first visit of Bishop Morris, in the summer of 1869, shortly after his arrival in Oregon, when he preached twice and confirmed four. The church had been painted, the chancel provided with stalls and lectern, and funds were being raised for a chancel window (the window which is in the chancel of our present church). During the next year with aid from the Bishop, a school house was built on the rear of the church lot at a cost of $450. During the whole of his Rectorate of fourteen years, Mr. and Mrs. Hyland conducted a private school in this building. Many of the older residents of Astoria were pupils in this school.

In connection with the work at Astoria the Rector held occasional services at Cape Disappointment, Clatsop Plains and other places. During the second week of December, 1870 a "Missionary Convocation" was held in Astoria. There were present the Bishop, the Rev. T. A. Hyland, Rector, and the Rev. Messrs. A. S. Nicholson, W. H. Stoy, J. R. W. Sellwood and J. W. Sellwood. Nine services were held which were very well attended, the inclemency of the weather being con' sidered.

"During the year 1870-1871 the system of weekly offerings was adopted both by church and school, with the result that the congregation gave considerably more than ever before for various objects, and five-fold more for Diocesan Missions; and the Sunday School gave six times as much as in any former year."

It was during Mr. Hyland's rectorate that Holy Innocence Chapel in upper Astoria was built, largely by the gifts of General Adair and his family and friends, aided by Bishop Morris. Services have been maintained by the rectors of Grace Parish and the following missionaries, Rev. John Warren, Rev. W. L. Johnson, Rev. John O. Vince, and others.

The Sunday School contributed much to the life of this mission, having been carried on faithfully by members of the Adair family and others, the greater part falling on Miss Laura P. Adair who later married Bishop W. M. Barker, fourth bishop of Olympia.

Many may not be aware that Mr. Hyland had a brother, the Rev. Peter Edward Hyland, who came to Portland in 1860 to become rector of Trinity Church where he remained until 1865 when he left for Olympia. At Olympia he started the work of the church and had the distinction of being the first clergyman of the church in Northwestern Washington. He spent practically all of his ministry in the District Diocese of Olympia. In fact he established the church in nearly all of the larger towns and cities in Western Washington.

Mr. Thomas Hyland was rector of Grace church ,Astoria, for 14 years, and it was only due to the fact that the coast climate was

Holy Innocents Chapel, Upper Astoria

not kind to him that he resigned and went back east. After visiting in Vermont, he accepted a call to the Church of the Holy Comforter, New York City. In the early nineties Mr. and Mrs. Hyland came back to retire and lived the rest of their lives in Astoria. At the time the Diocesan convention met in Astoria in 1892, in his address, Bishop Morris spoke as follows: "The Rev. Thomas Hyland is now a resident in Astoria. Though his canonical relations are still with the Diocese of New York, and though not in the vigorous and unbroken health of former years, he has still officiated in his old parish and in some of the Portland churches with much acceotance, and we trust he may do years of good service in this land of his early and unabated affection." At the same convention the Rev. Mr. Short, rector of the Parish at that time, said he had been materially aided in his work by the Rev. T. A. Hyland. Mr. Hyland lived 12 years after this convention. He died in Astoria, December 11, 1904, at the age of 70. He was buried at Ocean View cemetery near the ocean.

Mrs. Martha E. Hyland, his devoted wife, lived for many years longer than her husband. She died in Astoria, June 25, 1925. In her will she left Grace Church endowment fund $10,000, the greater part of her estate. In more ways than one, the life and influence of these two devoted people will be felt in the parish and the community for years to come.

The second rector of Grace Parish, the Rev. Octavius Parker,

A Sunday School Picnic

came to Astaria, June 1, 1878, but remained but one year. While in Astaria, Mr. Parker was responsible for the building of the rectory for Holy Innocents Mission in the eastern part of Astaria.

Later in his career, 1886-9, the Rev. Mr. Parker had the distinction of being the first missionary under the American church to

Taken after the wedding of Rev. W. L. Johnson

Holy Innocents Interior

go to Alaska, starting the work which Dr. Chapman took up and carried on for so many years at Anvik.

On November 8th, 1879, the Rev. Alfred T. Perkins became Rector after there had been a vacancy of four months. Mr. Perkins had come directly from the east with Mrs. Perkins and their children. He remained in charge of Grace Parish until September 6th, 1881 when he resigned. There are no records of the events which took place in the Parish during his incumbency other than the record of his official acts as listed in the Parish Register which are as follows, Baptisms, 52, Confirmations 13, Marriages 8, Burials 19, and a list of 67 communicants.

After the resignation of Mr. Perkins there was a vacancy of twelve months, when the Rev. Mardon D. Wilson became Rector. It was at the beginning of his rectorate that a beautiful stained glass window was put in the old church in memory of Robert M. Trenchard, who died May 20, 1882 at the age of twenty. This window was the gift of his young friends. The window was transferred to the new church building, the corner stone of which was laid three years later. In a short history of the Parish which Mr. Wilson left in the second volume of the Parish records, he states that on the 31st of January, 1883, Mrs. Susan Shively, a member of the church passed away and left in her will provision for the building of a new church and goes on to say, "acting under authority of her will, Mr. Elliott, her brother and trustee, disposed of all this property excepting lots 3 and 4 of block 16, Shively's Astoria, which he reserved for the church. He

THE FIRST SIX RECTORS OF GRACE CHURCH ASTORIA

Thomas A. Hyland,

Octavious Parker,

Alfred T. Perkins,

Mardon D. Wilson

Wm. S. Short,

George F. Rosenmuller,

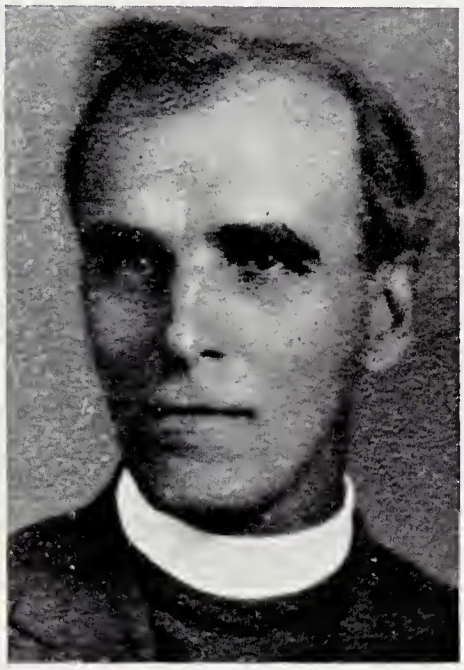
then expended $1500 of the trust money in grading and filling these Grace Church and to obtain the money to pay for this lot ($1500) the Church Corporation sold to Mr. C. S. Wright the old church building lots to make them fit to build upon. He then sold one of these lots to and the ground on which it stands for $2200. Then Mr. Elliott donated $4500 to the building of a new church on the remaining one of the two lots mentioned above. The plans for this church were drawn by Mr. J. E. Ferguson under the constant and personal supervision of the Rev. Mardon D. Wilson. The corner stone of the new church was laid with appropriate ceremonies by the Rt. Rev. J. A. Paddock, D. D., Missionary Bishop of Washington Territory, in the necessary absence of the Bishop of Oregon. The building was first occupied for service on Easter Day 1886, the first service being a celebration of the Holy Communion at 6:30 A.M. On Wednesday, June 2, 1886 the Annual Convocation met for the first time in Astoria, and on the following Sunday the church was consecrated. Up to the date of the consecration of the church there had been expended on the building alone (including furniture) about $6100. The lighting arrangements, meter, gas fixtures, etc., were furnished by a subscription raised for that purpose by Mr. Elliott. A subscription of $307 was raised by the Rector for the new pews in the church, the cost of said pews finished and ready for use being nearly $500. The Chancel carpet was provided by the Rev. Mardon D. Wilson with money given him by friends in Philadelphia. The Credence Table is the personal gift of the Rev. Mr. Wilson. The Brass Tablet in memory of Mrs. Shively is the gift of Mr. Elliott."

Mr. Wilson resigned very soon after the consecration of the new church, July 1st, 1886.

There was another vacancy of a year before the arrival of the Rev. Wm. S. Short from Connecticut, August 1887. The new Rector was a young man, the work in Astoria being his first with exception of a short assistantship at Holy Trinity Church, Middletown, Connecticut. Mr. Short's rectorship was by far the longest of the nine, twenty-two years. It was under his direction that Grace Church Boy's Choir was organized and flourished. Undoubtedly it was one of the very few boy choirs in the west at that time. The first Rectory on 16th Street was procured during his rectorship, the mortgage being paid off just before his resignation. The church building, also was raised at this time, giving more room for Sunday School and Guilds, and the streets both in front of the church and the Rectory were very materially improved.

But it was not property improvement which will make Mr. Short's name one long to be remembered in and around Astoria. It was his missionary activity. In those difficult days of travel he visited many parts of Clatsop county and in the State of Washington, across the

W. R. B. Turrill



Fred'k C. Taylor

Columbia river. He was responsible for starting the missions at Seaside, at Skipanon and later at Warrenton. The writer in his travels is continually meeting people who were visited and ministered to by this beloved missionary from Grace Parish. Mr. Short resigned 1909. At the time of this writing, at the end of the 75th anniversary year of the Parish, we are glad to say that Mr. Short is still living, having retired to live with his daughter in Santa Rosa, Calif., where he is Rector Emeritus of the Church of the Incarnation. In another place in this booklet, there is a letter filled with reminiscences of the days when he was the Rector of Grace Church.

The Rev. George F. Rosenmuller, who had been called from McKeesport, Pennsylvania became the sixth Rector of Grace Parish in December, 1909. On the Sunday on which he first assumed his duties the new recast bell was rung for the first time. The bell had been recast from the old bell by Mr. James Lovell. Mr. H. G. Van Dusen who was Senior Warden at that time in an address to the new Rector said, "This bell is dear to the hearts of many of your people for it is our little old bell recast and made four times larger by the addition of metal of a similar character."

"The original bell was the first church bell ever installed in the town, an honor which our church people are disposed to feel proud of. It was bought in San Francisco in June, 1867, by the first Bishop of Oregon."

At the time of the 50th Anniversary of the building of the present Grace Church and the 25th Anniversary of the Ordination of the Rev. E. W. Hughes.

It was during Mr. Rosenmuller's rectorship that the wing of the church, enlarging the Vestry room and adding two extra rooms, one below and one above, was planned, worked for and almost realized, costing in all about $2900. It was also during his incumbency that the articles of incorporation of the Parish were revised. Near the end of the year 1914, Mr. Rosenmuller who was now getting pretty well along in years suffered a slight stroke which made it necessary for him to give up active work. His resignation took effect Easter, 1915.

The Rev. W. R. B. Turrill became Rector in June 1916 and served until September 1919. A greater part of Mr. Turrill's rectorship was during the period of the World War. The parish grew considerably owing to the fact that a large number of people came to live in Astoria and work in the ship yards. It was during Mr. Turrill's incumbency that the program of beautifying the Chancil of the church was continued. It was then that our fine carved oak altar was made possible by St. Agnes Guild. It was also at this time that Grace Church Endowment Fund came into being principally through interest and efforts of Mr. Frank Spittle. The first record of the mention of an endowment fund is found in the minutes of the Vestry for February 14, 1918. From then on the matter of establishing such a fund was discussed and worked for until the articles of incorporation were acted upon and trustees elected at the annual meeting of May 7, 1919.

The Rev. Frederick C. Taylor came and took charge as the eighth Rector of Grace Parish February 1st, 1920. There were three

very difficult pieces of work accomplished by Mr. Taylor very soon after he arrived; the carrying through of the first nation-wide campaign which brought the Parish's proportionate giving to a much higher level; secondly, the meeting of the conditions brought about by Astoria's fire in December 1922; and thirdly, the building of the present fine and modern Rectory. Mr. Taylor organized and was the first Scout Master of Grace Church Troop of Boy Scouts. This troop has been in continuous existence since its organization, at one time being the only troop in Astoria. It now has a 15 year veteran charter. Mr. Taylor resigned to accept a call to Nogales, Arizona, November, 1926.

The present Rector the Rev. Edwin W. Hughes was called from the Parish of the Good Shepherd, Allegan, Michigan to become the ninth Rector of the Parish. Previous to his rectorate in Michigan he had served as a missionary in Anchorage, Alaska, making the fourth of the nine Grace Church Rectors who have served in distant fields

Grace Church and Rectory as it now is.

clossed by the Genera! Boord of Missions os foreign; the Rev. Octovious Porker, Alosko; the Rev. Wm. S. Short, Howaii; the Rev. Frederick Toylor, Alaska; and the present Rector, Alosko. Mr. Hughes' Rectorote took effect September 1st, 1927.

Through the oble assistonce ond generosity of the loity, during

Edwin W Hughes

Mr. Hughes' incumbency, a lorge number of improvements hove been mode to the church property, new furnoce ond heoting systems, redecoroting of church and Rectory inside ond out, new cothedrol gloss windows in the church, completing of the ook finishings of the chancel largely the work of our Senior Warden, Mr. Thomos Thomoson, electric blower for pipe orgon, extension of church property to the west, and the oddition of three rooms to the Rectory. Not counting

the many who have left Astoria, the congregation has increased from 188 to 242. It is interesting to note that in its seventy-five years of history there have been confirmed in Grace Church 689 people, establishing the fact that a Parish like Grace in a small city is a feeder parish for the larger cities.

The Present Grace Church Interior
With Christmas Greens

During Mr. Hughes' rectorate an excellent choir has been developed, largely through the interest and generosity of one layman. St. Catharine's Guild, now the chief working Guild of the Parish has been organized and a Parish Leaflet published continuously for a period of eleven years.

The brief history would not be complete without acknowledging the devotion and faithfulness of the many lay people who have serv-

ed it in these seventy-five years. There are six members of the Parish who are now living who were living at the time the Parish was founded, Miss Sophie Boelling, Miss Eliza Boelling, Mrs. P. L. Cherry, Mrs. Frank Dunbar, Mrs. Fannie Van Dusen and Mrs. H. G. Van Dusen. Our oldest layman in point of membership and service in the Parish is Mr. Frank Spittle who came to this community and Parish in 1888. There are many others whose names ought to be mentioned and those who have worked so faithfully in Guilds and vestries, but there is neither time or space. It is the hope of the writer to write down a much more complete history of Grace Parish some day for he feels that much has been left unsaid in this short account.

He wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Rev. E. H. Clark, the Librarian of the Diocese for early records and to Miss Sophie and Miss Eliza Boelling and Mr. James Cellars for help with the correction of manuscript.

We are also indebted to Mr. John Spittle, San Francisco, for the drawing on the cover and to his father, Mr. Frank Spittle, for the drawing on back of cover which he drew of the Rectory and church forty years ago.

St. Thomas Chapel, Warrenton

A Brief History of Seventy-Five Years

My Dear Rector and Friends of Grace Church:

A Diamond Jubilee is not to be snubbed. It comes but once in a lifetime (never in most lives), and your diamond has been so "ground" by experience that her facets reflect her, and her Maker's light to many a distant shore. That is as it should be. That is what you were established for. Warrenton, Skipanon, Seaside, Hammond, Fort Stevens, Lewis and Clark, Birkenfeld, Westport, and Bear Creek; and Knappton and Ilwaco in Washington Territory; all these and more have received the reflection of your light.

And remember that Octavius Parker of pioneer Alaska fame went from Grace Church, Astoria. As from Columbia to Columbia shined that true light which please God shall never go out.

The present generation may be impressed to learn that Bishop John Paddock, the first of "Washington Territory," visited and preached from our Church, as did his son Robert of Eastern Oregon later. Funsten of Idaho, Talbot of Wyoming, Baker and Keator of Olympia, Nicholas of California, Moreland of Sacramento, and Rowe of Alaska, have graced our pulpit. Bishop Phillips Brooks also visited the parish.

Two of our former Choir Boys were Missionaries in Korea, and a most unusual and striking fact of the early nineties was the Mite Box Offering stood in the "first twenty three' of the whole nation.

Railroads and night-boats were begun in my early years. Before that, it took three days to shop in Portland and almost as long to visit Seaside. On my first visit to Elk Creek a cougar surprised and startled me. The mud on the trail was almost impassable. The old three seated wagons down the Plains, and always to the cemetery at Skipanon, were oldtime comforts indeed, with mud and rain in winter and dust in summer.

Visits to Klaskanine for funerals and weddings took all day from starlight to starlight. A wonderful trip to Vesper by wagon and over a skid road in mud and rain for a funeral took so long that we had to remain overnight, but were enabled to have a family communion.

We acquired the Rectory on Sixteenth Street the first year I was in Astoria, and the basement of the church for Sunday School and Guild a few years later.

Street improvements were most necessary from the first. No planks in front of the church during my first year. A boy got stuck in the mud right in front of the church; he left his rubber boots in the street and walked barefoot home. The street in front of the Rectory was all of ten feet above the level of the lot and no grading or sidewalk whatever.

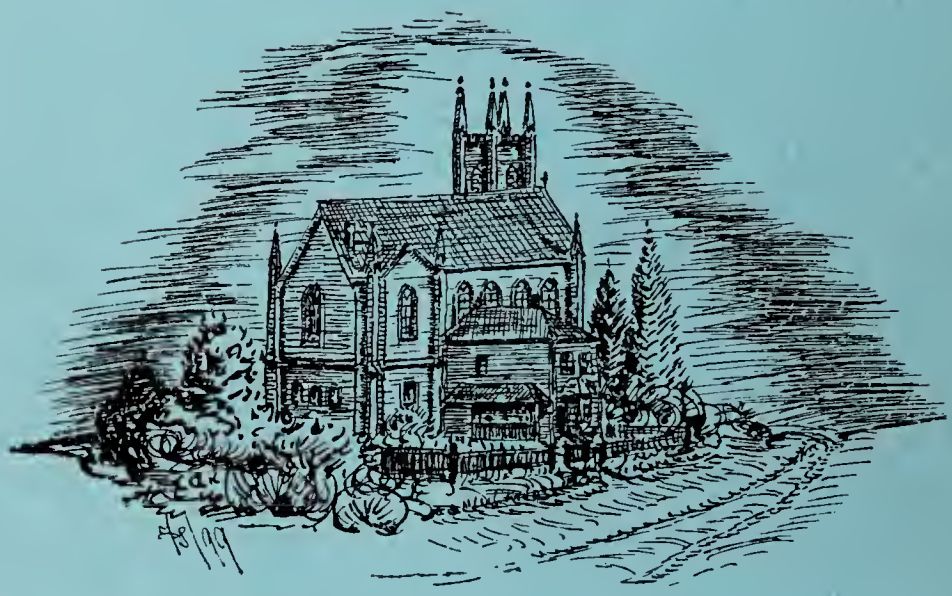
The baseball lot and circus lot were where the Columbia Hospital now stands. The fun we had---and the beloved men and boys no longer among us. How dear they are. The early names recall many a noble deed. General John Adair, first Collector of U. S. Customs; Robert McEwan, father of the first Oregon boy who was ordained to the ministry; George Hume, salmon packer; John Trullinger, one sawmill man; and scores of river boat captains and bar pilots. Peace to their souls, good and faithful servants.

And the pioneer mothers did not lag behind. Mothers VanDusen, Trenchard, Boelling, Hustler, Adair, Young, Rogers, (among scores of others), scrubbed the church floor, washed the windows, dusted the pews---and raised funds (as well as dust) to pay many bills.

One of the outstanding memories of love and sacrifice was my first "Donation Party" in 1888. A stream of good eats and good things. (some of which are before me as I write), furniture, dishes, and utensils, flowed in all day long, and at six p. m. Mrs. Short and I had to sit down while the callers got supper, set the table with all manner of good things, washed the dishes, and left us what remained over and above. That was a red letter day in my life.

May they, and I, and you, my beloved friends, (their successors), be permitted to enjoy "The Marriage Supper of the Lamb."

Your loving old friend and Pastor,

WM. S. SHORT.

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